575 184 We have not been able to learn anything about the ceremonies of protection against the bivur. However, Akam Eyene told us that when a member of the buiti has inadvertently eaten the flesh of his protecting animal, which is absolutely forbidden, he holds a meeting called dzimba in the course of which the wrongdoer, after dancing, presents his case. Then the [77] head of the buiti absolves him, spitting scrapings of the bark of the ovañ onto his head.

575 198 The buiti has a secret language. Akam Eyene gave us only the secret names of certain of its initiates, which correspond to the animals chosen as protectors:

He himself	called	ndzikwe	chimpanzee
Ondo Ngema	—	ngilabongo	gorilla
Akum Eyene	—	esingi	tiger cat
Ngema Eyene	—	mitumbu	panther
Bekeka Yebe	—	mogabene	elephant
Angwe Nseme	—	menyanga	snake
Mba Minkwe	—	meyasamba	rooster
Kumeyeme	—	mepeku	eagle
Abaga	—	ndzobe	wildcat

771 V. Totemism. Despite all questions which we have put to many natives of various tribes, we have not been able to find any signs of totemism. We were only told of instances of individual unions with animals, as in the buiti or following an akaga.

Family and Collective Life

000 In this chapter we will examine the life of the individual in the family and in the social group, from his conception until his death, in corporating into this framework the family and tribal organization as well as relations with strangers.

842 833 841 Conception (menoñ bum). A woman, we have been told by our male and female informants, cannot conceive until after she has menstruated four times. She is, in fact, forbidden to have sexual intercourse before her fourth period. At her first menses, the woman tells her mother or her mother-in-law if she is married (usually her mother-in-law, since there is hardly even a young girl, still with her family, without a husband); the latter henceforth supervises her more

771 The first observers described the Pahouin, especially the Fang,
781 as "less superstitious," "less given to fetishism" than neighboring
114 populations. Trilles and Martrou emphasized their profound religious sentiment, while Allégret (no. 147) gives very interesting information about the feeling of religious destitution they experienced, particularly after contact with Europeans. Often observed also has been the ease with which they would adopt new beliefs and ceremonies, and this refers not only to Christian sects but to cults like bwiti and ngôl and even, before the last war, to freemasonry in the vicinity of Libreville.

All these influences are so intermingled that we must resort to a kind of conjectural palaeontology in order to reconstruct their original beliefs. Without casting any reflection upon the intellectual integrity of observers like Trilles and Martrou, we must recognize—and regret—that a certain professional slant from time to time affected their conclusions, to a point that induces us to turn instead to laymen much less well qualified linguistically, like Largeau, of whom Trilles has shown himself perhaps a little too critical.

a. Concept of God, Creation

776 The Pahouin believe (or used to believe, see later on) in a creator god Mebe'e (Fang, Mebere, Mebeghe), eternal, formerly immanent, becoming infinitely transcendant after the first nsem.

The word Mebe'e seems to be related to the verb be'e, to carry, which has the agent-noun, mbe'e. Mbe'e is a plural form, corresponding to nouns of action and also to the collective plural forms of names of liquids (mendim = water, metyi = blood, meyôm = sperm, etc.). It is usually accompanied by triple apposition: "Mebe'e, Mebe'e menkpwa, sokuma, mbongbwe" (or, according to Trezenem, mba angwe). The meaning of these three qualifiers is as uncertain as that of Mebe'e; menkpwa should probably be connected with kpwaé = to strike down, to judge, to condemn; sokuma with kôm (kum) = to arrange, to direct, sô conveying the idea of generosity, rectitude, balance (Boulou, soso, zoso); mbongbwé would then, according to Grebert, mean "creator of generations" (bo = to make; ngbwé = maternal kinship), but could also be /108/ connected with ngbwa = love, friendship, alliance, with the sense of "he who makes an alliance" or "he who loves."

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d) Consequences of circumcision. Mgr. Le Roy's opinion of circumcision. The writer's view. [497]
2) Initiation of the young man. Tests before admission to warrior rank. Consecration and song connected with the rifle, the hymn to the sun.
3) Consecration of the chief. a) The ceremony. The consecration song. Sacrifice and victim. b) Rite of the spear among Marundi and Fan. Purpose of these ceremonies. c) Rites of initiation and consecration of the chief compared with the religious role of the Pharaoh. d) Mistakes made by European administration in appointing chiefs outside the main lineage. e) Change of the clan totem. Examples.
4) War and palavers. War sacrifice and the victim. The ceremony. The sacrificer. Communion through the victim.
5) Large hunting expeditions. Sacrifice; the motive.
6) Founding a new village. Reasons. Preparatory rites.
Establishment.
7) Ordeals. Various kinds. Occasions for ordeals. Fire and boiling water tests. The poison test.
8) Blood exchange. How it is practiced among the Fan and among various African tribes.

[Beginning of Text]

● 111 The whole of the Fan's life, like that of every African, whether Bantu or other, is deeply imbued with religion.

Sometimes it gives form to and determines the principal actions of family and social life, sometimes it constitutes their very essence and raison d'être. It is then, strictly speaking, religious life.

These acts of worship are performed by special ministers, by the father of the family in the case of family rites, by the clan or tribal chief for public phenomena, and by the practitioner

T71 or true minister for religious life. Often, however, the practitioner actually, though not lawfully, replaces the father and especially the clan or racial chief. Alongside the practitioner, struggling against him in the background, appears the sorcerer, the agent of the extra- or contra-legal cult.

The religious act is addressed to spirits, to souls of the departed, to ancestors, to unknown forces of nature, etc. It is also addressed to the totem, as we have defined it. The totem is connected with religion by close ties which, at least for the Fan, link it inseparably with ancestor worship and determine the worshipping rites that are its due. [498]

1. Totemic Claim to Worshipping Rites

T19 The claims of the true totem to worshipping rites is clearly defined by virtue of its being the father of the tribe and founder of the race.

In using these two words, "father" and "founder," as I have pointed out before, I in no way mean that the eponymous animal is the real father of the face, the actual progenitive founder. I am using these words as the natives do, so as to adopt their own terms. Frequently, they have been misunderstood. (1)

1. Cf. S. Reinach, Orpheus (under the word "totem"), p. 20 and passim.

Real kinship has often been confused with kinship based on sentiment, mode of speech, or custom. Moreover, some writers have been in doubt, even with firsthand evidence:

"I have never been able to ascertain from Banyoro or Baganda that their forefathers at any time believed the clan to be descended from the object chosen as a totem. The matter remains very obscure. It may be remotely connected with ancestor-worship, which is certainly the foundation of such religious beliefs as are held by the Banyoro, as by most other Negro races." (2)

2. Sir H. Johnston, The Uganda Protectorate, Preface.

779 As may be seen from these remarks of Sir Harry Johnston, the resemblance between mvamayôn and esayôn was more the consequence of a writer's preconceived idea or of a native's misinterpreted statement than of the words themselves and the crux of the matter.

What, then, are the totem's rights, according to this view of kinship; are they real in the exact sense of the word or simply the result of blood exchange?

As father of the tribe, mvamayôn, and founder of the race, the totem has a claim to a cult, and, consequently, to special rites, determining the circumstances, place, and manner of worship.

But the mvamayôn may and should be considered from two points of view: it is the protector of clan and tribe, and thereby, strictly speaking, the mvamayôn; it consequently has a right to public worship, national or tribal. But it is also the protector of the family [499] and the individual, and thereby, the étotore; it consequently has a claim to family and individual worship. In order to apprehend and understand the significance of many totemic phenomena, it is absolutely necessary to make this distinction.

The mvamayôn therefore ought to receive ritual worship, and not just any kind; this presupposes the intervention of a practitioner representing the chief, or the head of the family or even the tribal chief. And not only does the mvamayôn have a right to collective public worship in special circumstances laid down by law, such as the establishment of a new village, but further, as étotore, to private, individual worship, which requires the intervention of a private person and a head of a family, not of a practitioner or tribal chief.

779 But, let me emphasize that this totemic worship, whether
● 771 private and individual or tribal and general, does not in certain respects fit into the wider framework of religious life per se, or, if one prefers, does not constitute the religion of the nation or tribe. Indeed the practitioner is the rightful representative, guardian, and recognized sacrificial ministrant of religion, not by choice but by his function itself.

In totemic worship, on the other hand, which is not religion but a collection of religious phenomena, this role belongs to the family or tribal head and if, in an exceptional case, it is performed by the practitioner, he does so as a delegate only.

The cult of the mvamayôn is in fact a derived cult, primarily based upon the esayôn cult without which it would have no raison d'être. Indeed, the esayôn is the true father of the tribe and without the esayôn there could be no mvamayôn; one evidently cannot exist without the other. But the esayôn, or ancestral worship, is independent of what is strictly a religious cult or recognition of the divine being and worship of spirits. The esayôn cult is connected with religion per se in the sense of drawing upon it as a source and, according to the Fan, of deriving from it its ultimate origin and fundamental rationale. The esayôn cult is therefore primarily and in principle a family cult, if one takes each tribal ancestor separately. It is national if the first ancestor or ancestors of the tribe are viewed together. The cult, then, is definitely connected with the genuine religious cult of deities, [500] in the sense that in many Bantu tribes, and probably among the Fan, the first ancestor or ancestors of the tribe are now deified and raised to the rank of national gods, or at least, spiritual protectors of the tribe.

Totemism therefore has only relative importance as a basis for Fan religious conceptions and takes, one might say, only third place, after the leading cult of spirits and then after ancestor worship, of which it is but a derivative.

Totemic rites will, as I have said, be general or particular according to whether they are connected with the mvamayôn or the ètotore. The first rites relate to the race itself and what bears upon its continuance and preservation, the others relate to the individual, not as a particular person but as a member of the race. From this we come quite naturally to recognizing among them those of the family and those of society, with religion entering to a greater or lesser extent into the second.

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

so now because I known it's wrong." His latter statement I gave very little credit to. 266

Fang who admitted to me that "bad Fang eat men, but not the people of their town or tribe," asserted that all parts of the body are eaten; that the victims are not considered as sacrifices to any gods, but that the bones are used for *biang* (medicine).

Human flesh does not form part of the regular food of the people, and to a certain extent the natives seem ashamed to admit that "other Fang eat men"; they never admitted to me that any of *their tribe* did so.

XII.—*Religion, Fetish or Biang (medicine).*

These anthropophagi have some idea of God, a superior being, their *Tata* (father) *a bo mam mesese* (he made all things). *Anyambi* is their *tata* and ranks above all other Fang gods, because *a'ne yóp* (he is above, *lit.* lives in heaven). The Fang have other or minor gods, the greatest of whom was *Sekóme*, and many Fang say *Sekóme* and *Anyambi* are one and the same god; hence the saying "*Sekóme anga kóm mam mesese*" (Sekôme he made (arranged) all things). The following is a list of Fang minor gods: 776

Nzame.
Mabeka.
Nkwa.
Sekôme (reported as being Anyambi).
Ube.
Nzame begat Mabeka.
Mabeka begat Nkwa.
Nkwa begat Sekôme.
Sekôme begat Ube.

The Fang have no religion in the generally accepted meaning of the word, for it is mostly made up of an unlimited and disconnected chain of superstitious beliefs. [771]

The key-note of the superstitious beliefs of the Fang is that the Present and Future is filled with innumerable numbers of spiritual beings. The great spirit *Tata* (father) *Anyambi* or *Sekóme* is considered indifferent to the wants and sufferings of men, women and children. I do not believe that worship is directed in any way whatever to the spirits of Present and Future, the natives seeming rather to consider propitiation, exhortation and supplication as the three things most essential and necessary. The spirits of Present and Future possess to a large degree the better human passions, and also the baser ones. The origin of these innumerable spirits of Present and Future is extremely vague: *Anyambi* or *Sekóme* is credited with having created many; others are the souls of dead relatives, still retaining after death human sensations and desires. The Fang have the same